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Commission on the Status of Women
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Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and to the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century"

Andorra, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cambodia, Canada, Cape Verde,* Chile, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Luxembourg, Moldova, Monaco, Montenegro, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Panama, Peru, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland: revised draft resolution

Ending female genital mutilation

The Commission on the Status of Women,

Recalling General Assembly resolutions 56/128 of 19 December 2001, 58/156 of 22 December 2003 and 60/141 of 16 December 2005, Commission on the Status of Women resolution 51/2[1] and all other relevant resolutions, as well as all relevant agreed conclusions of the Commission on the Status of Women,

Welcoming the initiative taken by the Secretary-General on 25 February 2008 to launch a multi-year campaign to end violence against women,

Reaffirming that the Convention on the Rights of the Child[2] and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women,[3]

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* On behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Group of African States.

[1] *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2007, Supplement No. 7* (E/2007/27), chap. I, sect. D.

[2] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1577, No. 27531.

[3] Ibid., vol. 1249, No. 20378.

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together with their Optional Protocols, constitute an important contribution to the legal framework for the protection and promotion of the human rights of girls,

Reaffirming also the Beijing Declaration[4] and Platform for Action,[5] the outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century",[6] the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development[7] and the Programme of Action of the World Summit for Social Development[8] and their five- and ten-year reviews, as well as the United Nations Millennium Declaration[9] and the commitments relevant to the girl child made at the 2005 World Summit,[10]

Recalling the entry into force on 25 November 2005 of the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights[11] on the Rights of Women of Africa, adopted in Maputo on 11 July 2003, which contains, inter alia, undertakings and commitments on ending female genital mutilation and marks a significant milestone towards the abandonment and ending of female genital mutilation,

Recalling also general recommendation 14, concerning female circumcision, adopted by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women at its ninth session;[12] paragraphs 11, 20 and 24 (l) of general recommendation 19, concerning violence against women, adopted by the Committee at its eleventh session;[13] and paragraphs 15 (d) and 18 of general recommendation 24, concerning article 12 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women on women and health, adopted by the Committee at its twentieth session;[14] and taking note of paragraphs 21, 35 and 51 of general comment 14 concerning article 12 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights[15] adopted by the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights at its twenty-second session,[16]

Recognizing that female genital mutilation violates and impairs or nullifies the enjoyment of the human rights of women and girls,

Recognizing also that female genital mutilation is an irreparable, irreversible abuse that affects one hundred to one hundred and forty million women and girls

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[4] *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4-15 September 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution 1, annex I.

[5] Ibid., annex II.

[6] General Assembly resolution S-23/2, annex, and resolution S-23/3, annex.

[7] *Report of the International Conference on Population and Development, Cairo, 5-13 September 1994* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.95.XIII.18), chap. I, resolution 1, annex.

[8] *Report of the World Summit for Social Development, Copenhagen, 6-12 March 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.8), chap. I, resolution 1, annex II.

[9] See General Assembly resolution 55/2.

[10] See General Assembly resolution 60/1.

[11] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1520, No. 26363.

[12] See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-fifth Session, Supplement No. 38* (A/45/39), chap. IV.

[13] Ibid., *Forty-seventh Session, Supplement No. 38* (A/47/38), chap. I.

[14] Ibid., *Fifty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 38* (A/54/38), chap. I.

[15] See General Assembly resolution 2200 (XXI), annex.

[16] *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2001, Supplement No. 2* (E/2001/22), annex IV.

alive today, and that each year a further three million girls are at risk of undergoing the procedure,

Reaffirming that harmful traditional or customary practices, including female genital mutilation, constitute a serious threat to the health of women and girls, including their psychological, sexual and reproductive health, which can increase their vulnerability to HIV and may have adverse obstetric and prenatal outcomes as well as fatal consequences, and that the abandonment of this harmful practice can be achieved only as a result of a comprehensive movement that involves all public and private stakeholders in society,

Recognizing that negative discriminatory stereotypical attitudes and behaviours have direct implications for the status and treatment of girls and that such negative stereotypes impede the implementation of legislative and normative frameworks that guarantee gender equality and prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex,

Welcoming the report of the Secretary-General on ending female genital mutilation and the recommendations contained therein,[17]

Welcoming also the in-depth study of the Secretary-General on all forms of violence against women[18] and the report of the independent expert for the United Nations study on violence against children,[19] and taking note of the recommendations contained therein,

Deeply concerned about discrimination against the girl child and the violation of the rights of the girl child, which often result in less access for girls to education, nutrition and physical and mental health care, in girls enjoying fewer of the rights, opportunities and benefits of childhood and adolescence than boys and in their often being subjected to various forms of cultural, social, sexual and economic exploitation and to violence and harmful practices, such as female infanticide, rape, incest, early marriage, forced marriage, prenatal sex selection and female genital mutilation,

Welcoming the call for Africa free of female genital mutilation, pledged at the African Union second Pan-African Forum on Children: midterm review, held in Cairo from 29 October to 2 November 2007, as well as the adoption of the call for accelerated action on the implementation of the Plan of Action towards Africa Fit for Children (2008-2012),[20]

1. *Stresses* that the empowerment of girls is key to breaking the cycle of discrimination and violence and for the promotion and protection of human rights, including the right to the highest attainable standard of mental and physical health, including sexual and reproductive health, and calls upon States parties to fulfil their obligations under the Convention on the Rights of the Child[2] and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women,[3] as well as their commitments to implement the United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women,[21] the Beijing Platform for Action[5] and the outcomes of the

[17] E/CN.6/2008/3.
[18] A/61/122 and Add.1 and Add.1/Corr.1.
[19] See A/62/209.
[20] A/62/653, annex.
[21] See General Assembly resolution 48/104.

twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century",[6] and of the twenty-seventh special session of the General Assembly on children;[22]

2. *Emphasizes* that awareness-raising, community mobilization, education and training are needed to ensure that all key actors, Government officials, including law enforcement and judicial personnel, health-care providers, religious and community leaders, teachers, employers, media professionals and those directly working with girls, as well as parents, families and communities, work to eliminate attitudes and harmful practices that negatively affect girls;

3. *Calls upon* States to strengthen advocacy and awareness-raising programmes, to mobilize girls and boys to take an active part in developing preventive and elimination programmes to address harmful traditional practices, especially female genital mutilation, and to engage communities and religious leaders, educational institutions, the media and families and provide increased financial support to efforts at all levels to end those practices;

4. *Urges* States to condemn all harmful traditional practices, in particular female genital mutilation;

5. *Calls upon* States to strengthen the level of education for women and girls and the capacity of health-care systems to meet their needs in line with the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, as this is critical for empowering them and their communities to end female genital mutilation;

6. *Urges* States to take all necessary measures, including enacting and enforcing legislation to prohibit female genital mutilation and to protect girls and women from this form of violence, and to end impunity;

7. *Also urges* States to promote, within the general framework of integration policies, effective and specific targeted measures for refugee women and women migrants and their communities, in order to protect girl children from female genital mutilation, including when the practice occurs outside the country of residence;

8. *Further urges* States to promote gender-sensitive, empowering educational processes by, as appropriate, reviewing and revising school curricula, educational materials and teacher-training programmes and elaborating policies and programmes of zero tolerance for violence against girls, including female genital mutilation, and to further integrate a comprehensive understanding of the causes and consequences of such violence against girls into education and training curricula at all levels;

9. *Urges* States to provide education and training on the rights of girls to families, community leaders and members of all professions relevant to the protection and empowerment of girls, such as all levels of health-care providers, social workers, police officers, legal and judicial personnel and prosecutors, in order to increase awareness and commitment to the promotion and protection of the rights of girls and appropriate responses to rights violations with regard to female genital mutilation;

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[22] General Assembly resolution S-27/2, annex.

10. *Also urges* States to ensure the national implementation of international and regional commitments and obligations undertaken as States parties or as signatories to various international instruments protecting the full enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms of girls and women, as well as their translation and wide distribution to the population and the judiciary;

11. *Further urges* States to review and, where appropriate, revise, amend or abolish all laws, regulations, policies, practices and customs, in particular female genital mutilation, that discriminate against women or have a discriminatory impact on women and girls and to ensure that provisions of multiple legal systems, where they exist, comply with international human rights obligations, commitments and principles, including the principle of non-discrimination;

12. *Urges* States to develop social and psychological support services and care and to take measures to improve health, including sexual and reproductive health, in order to assist women and girls who are subjected to this violence;

13. *Calls upon* States to develop policies, protocols and rules to ensure the effective implementation of national legislative frameworks on eliminating discrimination and violence against girls, in particular female genital mutilation, and to put in place adequate accountability mechanisms at the national and local levels to monitor adherence to and implementation of these legislative frameworks;

14. *Also calls upon* States to develop unified methods and standards for the collection of data on all forms of discrimination and violence against girls, especially forms that are underdocumented, such as female genital mutilation, and to develop additional indicators to effectively measure progress in eliminating female genital mutilation;

15. *Urges* States to allocate sufficient resources to the implementation of legislation and action plans aimed at abandoning female genital mutilation;

16. *Calls upon* States to develop, support and implement comprehensive and integrated strategies for the prevention of female genital mutilation, including the training of social workers, medical personnel and other relevant professionals, as well as programmes of alternative professional training for the practitioners;

17. *Also calls upon* the international community, the relevant United Nations entities and civil society to actively support, through the allocation of appropriate financial resources, targeted, innovative programmes and to disseminate best practices that address the needs and priorities of girls in vulnerable situations, such as that of female genital mutilation, who have difficulty accessing services and programmes, and in this regard welcomes the commitment of ten United Nations agencies in their joint statement of 27 February 2008 to continue working towards the elimination of female genital mutilation by, inter alia, providing technical and financial assistance to achieve this goal;

18. *Encourages* all decision makers, at all levels, with responsibilities for policies, legislation, programmes and allocation of public resources to play leadership roles in eliminating female genital mutilation;

19. *Also encourages* men and boys to continue to take positive initiatives and to work in partnership with women and girls to combat violence against women and girls, in particular female genital mutilation, through networks, peer programmes, information campaigns and training programmes;

20. *Requests* the Secretary-General to ensure that all relevant organizations and bodies of the United Nations system, in particular the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Population Fund, the World Health Organization, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the United Nations Development Fund for Women, the United Nations Development Programme and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, individually and collectively, take into account the protection and promotion of the rights of girls against female genital mutilation in their country programmes, as appropriate, and in accordance with national priorities, in order to further strengthen their efforts in this regard;

21. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to report to the Commission on the Status of Women at its fifty-fourth session on the implementation of the present resolution using information provided by Member States and verifiable information provided by organizations and bodies of the United Nations system and by non-governmental organizations, with a view to assessing the impact of the present resolution on the well-being of girls.